The Pattern of Change

121 The logic of socio-cultural change has a multi-causal type of linkage: that is, one single factor does not itself cause a new situation, but several separable factors -- cultural or environmental -- combine to cause varying patterns of a new situation. This has been the case in the Nilgiris, in rural Mysore, and in the Kondmal Hills.

We may state the process in another way. When a community moves from the state of subsistence cultivation to one of rational participation (i.e. maximization of gains) in a cash economy, certain changes occur in the culture and in the social organization. These changes are a result of the interaction of local ecological conditions, outside governmental activity, the availability of certain goods, services and entrepreneurial personnel, and perhaps the play of "chance" factors or "historical accidents" about which it is difficult to generalize. Because the combination of all these factors will vary from one region to another, the manner in which the economic transition takes place will also vary. This has been borne out in our comparison of three developing regions of India.

There are at the same time certain regularities to the processes of socio-cultural change. The case of the Badagas illustrates four ways in which traditional cultures are changing in the modern world. These four regularities have been noted in many different lands, and can be seen from our description of recent changes among the Badagas.

•12 (1) First, towns and cities are undoubtedly the focal points of change, and there is a definite correlation between the nature of socio-cultural change and the closeness of the relationship between town and village. This is certainly true for

S: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1989
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12 much of India. Dube voices the view of many when he says: "The inspiration and lead for modification in the traditional ways definitely come from the urban areas, brought into the village community by semi-urbanized people or inspired by the example of urban relatives" (Dube 1955: 230). The availability of all the most necessary materials and facilities in the towns of the Nilgiris at the time the Badagas were switching from a subsistence to a cash crop made the change relatively quick and effective for them. This contrasts with the situation in the Kondmal Hills, where there are no towns at all, and where the change from a subsistence to a cash crop took a much longer time, and indeed was never really completed by the Konds. There the communication with the towns in the plains was a slow and arduous process, while in the Nilgiris and in Mandya District the towns could be reached within a day no matter what type of transport was used. Today urban values embodied in the culture of the Nilgiri towns are readily accessible to the villagers, because they visit the towns very frequently and often know students, shopkeepers and casual acquaintances who are residents there. A comparable situation links the surrounding Kanarese villages with Mandya town.

It is true that the adoption of some urban values, and of urban artifacts, by a traditional peasantry does not necessarily have any immediate impact upon the rural social organization. This is reflected in a long essay by Lambert (1962), where he examines the concept that in modern India urban areas change more rapidly than the villages, and that cities act as catalysts in introducing changes to the villages. Of the 17 studies that Lambert examines in some detail, 16 are located in different parts of Northern India and Pakistan. The one exception is a study of Pariahs living near Bangalore (Woodruff 1959); as quoted by Lambert, it tells us 000 only that Pariahs are in the habit of visiting the city. We may therefore assume for

615 myth which equates them with Kanarese Brahmins in the Badaga home-land to the north. But the Haruvas are not accepted as Brahmins by any other Brahmin whom they now meet; they have no ceremony for investiture of the thread; no śraddha is performed for their dead; they do not know Sanskrit, and until quite recently were all 518 illiterate. Their adoption of the Brahminic model has not gone unopposed. The great 615 majority of Badagas are meat-eating Gaudas, whose on-going tradition is itself a guiding model for their behavior. Gaudas have never claimed to be Brahmins, and they disapprove of the "snobbish" attitude of the Haruvas who press this claim. Haruvas are thus caught, as it were, between two different models, the Brahminic one and the dominant Gauda one. And the Haruvas are outnumbered heavily by what is, amongst the Badagas, a large phratry that occupies the position of a "dominant caste" in several ways. Haruvas occupy a position not unlike that of Toreyas, from the point of view of the Gaudas. Both are said to be "employed" by the Gaudas as village-servants; both usually live as minorities in hamlets that are preponderantly Gauda; and both were traditionally dependent upon the good-will of their Gauda neighbors. In such hamlets Gaudas own most of the land and houses, control the festivals and the dispensation of justice, and permit no one but a Gauda to become the headman. Such a control very much tempers the Brahminic aspirations of the Haruvas; as might be expected, therefore, these aspirations find their fullest expression only in the four hamlets which are inhabited exclusively by Haruvas. Gaudas, instead of adopting the 177 Brahminic model, 615 are now tending to adopt the modern, metropolitan model that they see in exaggerated form in some films, and which they find helps them to understand the Tamilian traders and officials with whom they have so often to deal.

•12 To summarize the conclusions expressed in this chapter: (1) the towns of the Nilgiris have acted as catalysts and centers of resources for the socio-cultural

12 changes that began in the last century and have accelerated in this one; (2) the important shift from a subsistence economy to one based on cash transactions has been accompanied by an increased popularity of the nuclear family, although the ideal residential unit has long been the joint family; (3) the introduction of cash crops and the use of money have been associated with a break-down in the traditional patterns of cooperation linking Badagas with Todas, Kotas and Kurumbas; (4) heightened factionalism has been a concomitant of the change from a subsistence to a market economy.

Summary of Findings

178 At the time when the first Badagas started planting cash crops instead of the subsistence grains -- about the year 1913 -- conditions were very favorable for such an economic change. Their land was well suited to the new crops, technical information and seeds were available at the Government Farm in Nanjanad (Nilgiris), a large market was in need of the produce, and railway transportation enabled perishable goods to be shipped quickly across India.

So far as we know there was no external pressure placed upon the Badaga community to make the transition. The more affluent farmers decided that conditions were suitable for the change and took the chance with larger and larger crops. Their decision found quick reward and incentive in the profits from a suddenly expanded wartime market. Badaga potatoes and some other vegetables were shipped to European troops stationed in many parts of India, Ceylon, Burma and the Straits Settlements (Malaysia).

The effect of the cash profits was manifold. Increasing numbers of landowners were encouraged to switch to marketable vegetables. Many were able to